

Since the start of OIF/OEF, these trauma centers have served as regional referral centers for individuals who have sustained serious disabling conditions due to combat. Patients treated at these facilities may have a serious Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) alone or in combination with amputation, blindness, or other visual impairment, complex orthopedic injuries, auditory and vestibular disorders, and mental health concerns. Because TBI influences all other areas of rehabilitation, it is critical that individuals receive care for their TBI prior to, or in conjunction with, rehabilitation for their additional injuries.

"Operation Helping Hand" provides assistance to the families of the very seriously wounded and injured service members who were deployed in either Iraq or Afghanistan and are now receiving treatment at the James A. Haley VA Medical Center. The average hospital stay for the injured is approximately 45 days. The families of these injured service members travel from all over the country to be with their loved ones at this critical time.

"Operation Helping Hand" assistance ranges from providing rental or leased cars, bus or taxi fares, cell phones or phone cards to the families of wounded service members. The program also provides tickets to local amusement parks, movie theaters and restaurants to make these families more comfortable while they are in Tampa waiting for their loved ones to recuperate. The assistance provided allows families to focus on their loved ones' recovery.

This year marks the sixth year that Newman's Own Inc., Fisher House Foundation Inc., and the Military Times Media Group have joined forces to present the "Newman's Own Awards" which seek to reward ingenuity and innovation for volunteer organizations working to improve the quality of life for military personnel and their families. These organizations issued a challenge to all private organizations serving our military communities: "present an innovative plan to improve the quality of life for your military community and receive funding to carry out that plan."

This year, 177 organizations submitted nominations for the award. I am pleased that "Operation Helping Hand" received the top prize of \$100,000. Ten other organizations shared \$40,000 in grants.

I want to congratulate the Tampa Chapter of the MOAA and all the individuals involved in "Operation Helping Hand" for winning the Newman's Own Award. I also want to commend them and all the other award winners for their outstanding work in support of our military personnel and their families.

STATEMENT CONCERNING THE FUTURE OF U.S. RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2005

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, some prominent members of the Vietnamese community within my Congressional District have asked that I deliver a message to Con-

gress regarding human rights issues in Vietnam. I take this opportunity to express their sentiments on the heels of Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai's visit to the United States. I am convinced that while this is a historic and unprecedented visit, I believe that their concerns are equally important.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this statement be made a part of the official RECORD.

Vietnam is a nation that has a record of violating human rights and suppressing religious freedom. This has been recorded in the U.S. State Department's 2004 Human Rights report on Vietnam. The report declares that the governing party, the Communist Party of Vietnam, has restricted the freedom of speech, the freedom of press, and the freedom of assembly, freedoms that our nation holds so dear. The Vietnamese government also continues to hold political and religious prisoners. It prohibits human rights organizations and political, labor, and social organizations from forming or operating. The 2004 U.S. State Department report also found that government security forces have been known to beat, shoot, and even bear responsibility for the disappearance of its citizens. These are not the government activities of a free nation.

The United States must not ignore the oppressive practices of governments with which we build economic and military ties, for our relationships with other nations reflect our own national values and beliefs. While it is my sincere hope that relations between the United States and Vietnam will become stronger in the future, we must remember that our Nation prides itself upon protecting democracy and supporting human rights all over the world.

Although Vietnam has made steps toward progress, we have seen that it still partakes in practices meant to oppress its citizens. Therefore, it is my expectation that the United States will work with Vietnam to improve its grave human rights and religious freedom records so that we may continue to take steps to strengthen and broaden our ties with that country.

TRIBUTE TO MILDRED SPITZER, VOLUNTEER

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2005

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the ageless energy, optimism and achievements of Mildred Spitzer, who at 100 years young brings a brightness and light to her community.

Mrs. Spitzer's volunteer service at the University City Children's Center, the Washington University School of Medicine, and Temple Israel are part of her lifelong commitment to serving society. Mrs. Spitzer has spent what should be her retirement years performing office work, working as the secretary of her retiree's group, and caring for infants. Mr. Stephen Zwolak, the executive director of the children's center, says that her work is "wonderful," and provides the "human touch [the babies] need to create attachment," a cornerstone of the center's educational philosophy. By all ac-

counts, she inspires others with her youthful exuberance and enthusiasm.

Mrs. Spitzer was born on April 22, 1905, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where she also attended Temple University. While living in Summit, New Jersey, she founded a chapter of a Jewish educational charity. She was married to Harold Spitzer for 47 years and she is the proud matriarch of a family of three daughters, six grandchildren, and now six great grandchildren. Mildred Spitzer has resided in the First District of Missouri for the past 12 years. She is committed to regular exercise and played golf well into her eighties. She now enjoys playing cards and reading and takes pride in doing her own shopping and housework.

For her part, Mrs. Spitzer is humble and eager to thank God for her longevity, health, and happiness. Her philosophy of good—good will and good thoughts—is both pragmatic and profound, as she asks us all simply "What's the use in being cranky?" Her life stands as a testament to her kind spirit, faith and optimistic outlook.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Mrs. Mildred Spitzer before the U.S. House of Representatives for her many lifetime achievements, longevity, and ongoing vigor and energy. She has demonstrated an indefatigable love of life and a commitment to helping others. Mildred Spitzer is a national treasure and a source of national pride.

COMMEMORATING THE 33RD ANNIVERSARY OF TITLE IX

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2005

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate an extremely important anniversary.

Thirty-three years ago today, Title IX, the landmark legislation banning gender discrimination in federally funded education programs, was enacted into law.

I adamantly oppose restrictions to Title IX. Recent "clarifications" to the law will only lead to allowing schools to avoid providing equal opportunities to female students.

For women, especially young women, Title IX is one of the most important pieces of legislation in the past half century.

Title IX helps those who need help the most, particularly in low-income areas.

Girls who participate in athletics at the high school and college levels are more likely to graduate with higher grades than their peers who do not play sports. The health benefits of exercise are well documented and girls who play sports often take their appreciation of exercise and activity into their adulthood.

Team sports prepare girls for success in the workplace by teaching the benefits of teamwork and tenacity at a young and receptive age. Athletics imbue girls with self-confidence they may not be able to develop elsewhere.

We must not interfere with Title IX's effectiveness. That is why I oppose the recent clarification and advocate for increased equality in sports for female students.